

**Lucy Markerly: A Case Study of an Englishwoman's Immigration to the Western  
Reserve in the 1830s**

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Contending that women have been marginalized in the historical record investigating immigration, historians Donna Gabaccia and Suzanne Sinke have addressed this bias in the scholarly literature. Scholars Sydney Stahl Weinberg, Maxine S. Seller, and Susan Jacoby have called for changes in the study of immigration by integrating the female view into this important field of United States history. They assert that social history will be incomplete until the historiography includes both genders in a uniform study.<sup>1</sup> This paper will argue that Lucy Markerly, an English woman immigrant, provides a case study to examine questions and issues faced by women immigrants. As a widow who outlived two husbands, this educated woman's life and writing, speak to the motivations behind immigration in the 1830s. The research will assess her actions, as well as the economic, political, and spiritual beliefs revealed in her journal, poetry, and family library.<sup>2</sup>

“For my part, I neither dropt a tear nor heaved a sigh, for sometime past, home had not afforded me that comfort which in former periods it used to do, and I set out with a confident hope of finding that in the new world, which I feared would shortly be denied me in the old one--peace and competence...”<sup>3</sup> This quote begins the journal of Lucy Markerly, which recorded her emigration from Lincolnshire, England to the village of Hudson, Ohio in the Western Reserve. This woman’s journal serves as a focal point to assess numerous issues regarding women’s immigration to America. Markerly’s writing reveals her economic motivations for emigrating and her perception of government policies concerning taxes and tithes while illuminating her role in the leadership and planning process. The Biblical references in the diary disclose her religious and spiritual beliefs that sustained her during the illnesses and hardships while immigrating. This journal exhibits the importance of family and women’s supporting roles to other family members. Her record displays the wide range of emotions such as fear, anxiety, hope and relief, which were inevitable during a journey from one’s homeland to a new country. Further documents reveal her children’s and descendants’ successful assimilation into American society. To examine these issues, this essay analyzes Lucy Markerly’s life and journey as a chronological narrative from her journal and family papers.<sup>4</sup>

Although details of Lucy Markerly’s early life are somewhat sketchy, what is known is she was born to David Hurn in 1771 in Lincolnshire, England (her mother’s name is unknown in England). Lucy Hurn would marry two times. The first spouse’s surname was Darley (his first name is not found in the record) and records indicate he died sometime before 1814. From this union Lucy Darley bore two daughters. The first daughter (Christian name not in the record) married a man with the surname Norriss

(Christian name unknown) and they produced a son. This daughter survived Mr. Norriss and church records indicate she was living in Holbeach, Lincolnshire, in 1857. The family history noted that the son of the Norriss union had moved to the United States and in that same year he owned a farm in Wisconsin, one of the states in the Old Northwest with a high concentration of English immigrants. More information existed concerning Lucy Darley's younger daughter Hannah, born October 20, 1799, who married William Doncaster, born January 14, 1808. They were both natives of Fleet, Lincolnshire, England and accompanied Lucy on her journey.<sup>5</sup>

Following the death of her first husband, she married a second time to Samuel Markerly, born 1786, fifteen years her junior, and he died on October 19, 1831. This marriage produced two children, Rebecca and John. Rebecca Markerly was born in 1816 and died on April 23, 1828; her grave is in Fleet, Lincolnshire. John Markerly (later spelled Markillie, see endnote number 3) was born in 1814 and died in 1868. It was Lucy Hurn Darley Markerly's eighteen-year-old son, John Markerly, who first went to the United States in 1832. His mother, maternal uncle, David Hurn (named for his and Lucy's father), half-sister Hannah Doncaster and her husband William Doncaster would follow John. Lucy Markerly and her family's journey "From Old England towards America" began March 28, 1833.<sup>6</sup>

On that day, she aroused her family, departed before sunrise, and "bid an eternal farewell to our humble dwelling."<sup>7</sup> Markerly had arranged transportation for the family to go to Lynn, nearly 20 miles distant. One rented wagon carried the family and their belongings destined for the New World. They waited at Lynn until the next morning, Friday March 29, when they boarded the steamer, *Lord Nelson*, for Hull, 26 miles away.

Passenger lists from 1831 reveal over half of those emigrating were farmers, and those who left via the port of Hull came in the largest numbers from Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.<sup>8</sup> Markerly's family had lived on and operated a modest seven-acre farm passed down through Samuel Markerly's family. This emigration stream reflected the population exchange from Great Britain to the United States in an Atlantic economy.

During the mid-nineteenth-century, Great Britain was becoming the world's first industrial and urban nation. The United States also was following these societal developments in the Northeast while farmers and rural artisans exploited opportunities in the states formed from the former Northwest Territories. With Britain's move toward free trade, the economies of England and America grew more intertwined. From 1820 until 1860, concerning culture and economic growth, these nations were the two most interconnected countries in the world. While Britain received nearly half of American exports, approximately forty percent of United States imports came from that island nation. This Atlantic trade bound the two nations' economies closely together, and part of this fundamental socioeconomic development was the migration of English citizens to America. From the mid-1840s to the mid-1850s, America received nearly one-half million people from Great Britain. In addition to American officials' tendency to undercount the English and overstate the number of Celtic peoples (Welsh, Scot, Irish), many listed as going to Canada through the port of Quebec soon crossed over into the state of New York. Approximately three quarters of British emigrants chose America for their final destination instead of Australia, Canada, and South Africa.<sup>9</sup>

Arranging to immigrate to America would not be easy for Lucy Markerly, but she was a determined woman. Once she arrived at Hull, Markerly booked a transatlantic

passage for her family aboard the *HMS Westmoreland*. The party expected to sail on April 1, 1833, but already this widow was encountering logistical and personal difficulties. There were numerous delays with preparing the vessel for travel and the loading of supplies while moored at the Junction dock. The vessel would not depart until April 9 more than a week behind schedule. In the meantime, she became seriously ill, noting in her journal “I was extremely ill most of that time, more sick than I ever was when we got out to sea.”<sup>10</sup> Her journal made only a passing reference to her brother David’s role in the planning and execution of their journey to America, noting only that he suffered the least from seasickness among all the family members. Her son-in-law, William Doncaster, garnered no mention in the logistical process at all. The record revealed that the widow assumed responsibility for all the ground and sea transportation to this point.<sup>11</sup> While most English emigrants arrived in American ports, the Markerly family chose to pass through Canada and the St. Lawrence River, which then tied them into the canal system of western New York and the waterways of the Great Lakes. This travel by water was the most expedient way for these emigrants to reach their destination of Hudson, Ohio in the Western Reserve. Markerly’s planning and leadership proved to be a definite asset to her family. Her faith and religious beliefs gave her strength to continue in her leadership role.

“The sea air seemed to renovate my spirits; and the wonder of the wide ocean around me, called forth the sincerest feelings of devotion to that being who holds the water in the hollow of his hand and governs universal nature by his omnipotent power.”<sup>12</sup> The widow recorded these feelings on the morning of their second day at sea. She expressed concern that all members of the party suffered from seasickness as the weather

worsened through the afternoon. Yet the increased winds carried the ship along at a brisk rate of eight knots per hour. However, as the storm strengthened the next day, the weather forced the vessel to anchor offshore near Aberdeen, Scotland to await a pilot who would steer them through the Pentland Firth. Of course, the high winds and rough sea exacerbated her family's illness. She noted that the noise of the wind through the rigging deafened their ears and virtually all the passengers were bedridden. Her journal revealed a matronly concern over her family's suffering from motion sickness, a recurring theme through the voyage.<sup>13</sup> However, her diary makes no mention of her own suffering over losing her second husband, Samuel Markerly, the year before her departure from England.

The death of a spouse can be a deciding factor in the decision to emigrate. Although English male immigrants to the United States outnumbered women by an approximate three to two ratio, Markerly's age at sixty-two placed her in an even smaller category. Scholar Charlotte Erickson notes that women over the age of sixty comprised only about seven percent of emigrants in a British census taken in 1841. Assuming that she fell into this category with her departure in 1833, this indicated a strong willed and exceptional individual for her age. Widowhood forced her to assume the traditional male role of logistical planner. Her journal noted her last sight of the British Isles as the ship passed through the Firth at thirteen to fourteen knots. She described the snow-covered mountains of Scotland on the left of the Firth and the rugged Orkney's on the right. "I went upon deck before I returned to bed to bid adieu to land (as I thought) and my native land forever."<sup>14</sup>

That night in bed, boxes and baskets bouncing into her berth because the sea was so rough awakened her. Anything not securely fastened down shifted violently below deck. In spite of the churning seas, she managed to get some sleep, but noted that the next day she was growing more fatigued. However, Markerly described herself as being in better condition than most of the other passengers and therefore blessed. She made this assessment even though snow and hail prevented her from going on deck. She passed the time making entries in her journal as she described her companions immobilized by seasickness. “Pale sickness reigns and spreads his sluggish leathern wings, while he, despotic sway maintains and o’er each form his mantle flings.”<sup>15</sup>

As one could imagine, conditions aboard sailing ships were deplorable compared to today’s standards. Unless someone has experienced intense seasickness, the closest approximation would be a severe case of stomach flu with no relief in sight unless they were able to get to dry land. Voyages often took five weeks or longer, and Markerly’s was no exception. Historian William E. Van Vugt described seasickness as a form of filthy hell, quoting one emigrant who said, “for the first quarter of an hour you feel afraid the ship is going down, and for the next quarter of an hour you feel afraid that it will *not* go down.” On Tuesday morning, April 16, her journal noted that she was feeling better than most of the females onboard, revealing an exceptional strength for a woman her age. However, she did mention one woman of lowborn status who exhibited no seasickness symptoms whatsoever. The widow categorized this woman as stuffing her face from dawn until night, constantly intoxicated and referred to her as a “disgusting animal.” Perhaps this revealed her position on temperance for she made no other reference to

spirits in any of her writing.<sup>16</sup> It is ironic that the ship made its best headway during high winds, which produced the worst symptoms of seasickness.

Luckily, for the passengers, the sea calmed and wind abated the next day but this reduced their speed to three knots. Still, she noted that this was a fast pace on good roads for land travel. As the sun warmed the afternoon, the passengers were able to come on deck and engage in some modest exercise, including Markerly, who took a short walk back and forth on the stern. Nevertheless, her journal reveals some impatience when she described their speed as slowing to only one to two knots per hour. This could very well fall into the category of “be careful what you wish for,” for the next day, the weather turned to raging winds and waves that ran mountains high, according to the author. She spent the day in a stupor, unable to either sit or stand. The rest of the passengers were in worse health than at anytime on the voyage so far. The following morning, hail pounded the sails and poured through the hatchway. That afternoon, she consulted with the first mate, who apologized that the ship was a good knot off course, and informed her that they were at Latitude 54 degrees, 20 minutes north. At that time, another curious passenger noted that it was four o’clock on board and six o’clock in the evening back in Hull, England, so they had traversed two time zones. Late that evening and early next morning, the pitching of the ship tossed every article not securely moored. As Markerly interrogated the sailors the next day, all members of the crew concurred that the stormy conditions would continue through the evening. She noted that the captain and all hands had been at their stations through the night until Sunday morning, April 21.<sup>17</sup>

Driven from the deck by the inclement weather, she retreated to her berth that day but was unable to write. She referred again to the waves as mountainous, and this very

well may not have been hyperbole, for that afternoon the Captain called a prayer meeting in steerage for all passengers. Her journal noted that he and most of the travelers were Methodists, and that the assembly was quite impressive. Markerly seemed to have drawn strength especially from one speaker who read a biblical passage. He recited “If I ascent into heaven, thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, thou art there, if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me.”<sup>18</sup> This passage in Markerly’s journal indicates her reliance on strong spiritual beliefs to protect both herself and her family. Perhaps she was thinking of her son, John, during this prayer meeting.

In this section of her memoir, April 22, she mentioned that a year ago at this time, her only son was on this same voyage and, perhaps his letters had warned of the stormy conditions. She noted that the hard gale and rough seas had rocked the ship so that they barely could stay in their sleeping berths. Under torrents of rain, the ship rolled to such a degree that the waves immersed the vessel’s lee bulwarks with the sails taken in to almost bare masts. Barely able to write in her berth, she could at least take solace in the fact that some of her family was near. However, John had made the crossing unaccompanied to lay the groundwork for the following family members. This form of chain or serial migration provided critical information to guide the immigrants in starting a new life. Markerly wrote, “I come my dear Boy ‘oer the wide stormy ocean to seek thy protection, and fly to thy arms. I think of my child with the tenderest emotion. This cheers my sad spirit when danger alarms.”<sup>19</sup> This passage indicated that she was confident in John’s ability to be financially successful in an expanding American economy.

Although Great Britain had crossed a threshold as an industrialized and urbanized society, the United States remained predominately agricultural and rural. Over three quarters of its labor force worked in agriculture, yet its industrial base was also rapidly growing providing English arrivals with an expanding range of occupational opportunities. Land ownership constituted a major motivator for many in this group, and they embraced the Jeffersonian concept that farm ownership provided independence. Erickson asserts that land ownership was a common goal for emigrants, even those with industrial backgrounds.<sup>20</sup> In the immediate antebellum period, the cost of productive tracts of real estate in America was approximate to comparable British land leased for one to two years. Free trade was a vigorously contested issue in Britain, which would benefit industrial workers, but those in the agricultural community feared the loss of tariff protection would result in ruinous foreign competition. Forward thinking individuals took proactive measures in the form of emigration to America where they hoped to participate in this country's free trade market advantage. Nevertheless, it would be an oversimplification to conclude that migrants merely responded to economic push forces from Britain or financial pull forces in the United States.<sup>21</sup> Prior to her departure Markerly noted in her poetry dated January 27, 1833:

Then I'll fly from this land of oppression and sorrow  
And seek me a country where comforts abound  
Where no one need dread the approach of tomorrow  
Lest meat, drink and clothing should cease to be found...<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, more pressing issues would occupy the widow and her family during the next few days of the voyage, complicated by the ever-inclement weather.

The next two days, April 23 and 24, gale force winds blowing in the wrong direction buffeted the ship as the crew tacked back and forth to make headway. A

bedridden Markerly wryly observed that they might be blown clear to Spitzbergen, rather than arriving in Quebec. She noted that only the cries of the children on board, the eldest merely three years old, punctuated the roaring of the wind and waves. The following morning, she observed that they were still in very rough seas and wrote that she was too ill to make further observations. Five days later, Markerly updated her log by writing, “I have not inserted a word in my memorandum, having had other fish to fry in Neptune’s great pan and as his element is of a cool nature, they have taken some time to cook them.”<sup>23</sup> On the morning she was too ill to write, she left her bed to tend to her daughter, Hannah Doncaster, who was due to give birth. “We had a young Neptune born; amidst the roaring of the wind and waves, for it was stormy in Latitude 56 degrees, 10 minutes North and Longitude 32 degrees, 29 minutes West.”<sup>24</sup>

These entries revealed how dedicated Markerly was to her family. Although too seasick to make journal entries, she still arose from her bed and nursed Hannah through the day as midwife. Her sense of duty prompted her to make an apologetic note in her journal for not writing daily. Prior to the professionalism of medicine and its male dominance, births took place at home under the care of experienced women. Additionally, her references to Neptune indicated that she was an educated person with knowledge of mythology and a wry sense of humor. However, the detailed notation of coordinates suggested more than an accurate sense of geography. It revealed that she felt a profound need to establish a sense of location as she relocated from her lifetime home to an uncertain future. That uncertainty heightened as the winds increased to a hurricane force for the first three days in the life of her new grandson, William Doncaster.

As the strong winds continued to threaten the ship, the vessel experienced additional dangers from the North Atlantic. When they neared the Banks of Newfoundland, the passengers and crew sighted the first iceberg of the voyage. On early Sunday morning, the first mate nearly fell overboard, and the temperature grew markedly colder. The next day, they passed two more icebergs, which Lucy bravely characterized, as “moving castles.” Yet the voyage was beginning to wear on them as she noted that the crew could not measure a sounding even with 150 fathom of line. She noted the bravery and skill of the Captain and crew who had carried them this far. More icebergs appeared on the horizon and tens of thousands of ice pieces and flows surrounded the ship. In the evening large pieces crashed against the hull and woke the passengers, who sometimes wondered if the ship would remain seaworthy. The following morning and afternoon, they passed even larger icebergs more than a mile long and a half-mile wide that drew within twenty yards of the vessel. Her journal related that the oldest sailor on board commented that he had never before seen so much ice in this expanse. After more than a month at sea, Markerly remarked, “I began to be very weary of my prison.”<sup>25</sup> This comment revealed her emotional state as fear and anxiety began to wear down her spirits. Van Vugt has stated that the physical and psychological burdens were formidable to the people who chose to emigrate. Family ties and group support were significant assets to emigrants who faced these harsh conditions and inclement weather.

On Saturday morning, May 11, she noted that the previous evening had been the coldest and the worst yet with the passengers struggling just to remain in their berths. During the day icicles hung from the rails and masts; glare ice covered the deck, making the footing treacherous. Although they passed another vessel, the widow was too weak to

leave her berth to witness it, and she related that all of the children had been ill for several days. The crew removed Hannah and baby William to another cabin while they scrubbed and washed their accommodations. That day her last journal entry stated “I think the little one cannot live much longer.”<sup>26</sup> The issue of illness continued as a major source of stress, and the family dealt with this through their religious faith.

Markerly spent the next several days in bed with a severe headache, but she continued to attend the Sunday afternoon prayer meetings hosted by their Captain. She observed that although two Irish Catholics were on board, they appeared to be respectable people. This grudging concession pointed out the cultural and religious differences between the Celts and the English. She noted that one of their Methodists argued with the Catholics over religious dogma. When not debating matters of faith, most of the passengers revealed feelings of homesickness. Those from Lincolnshire reminisced about their agricultural fair held at Sutton, while the emigrants from Yorkshire compared their exhibition at Beverly held on the same day. There was some cause for optimism when Markerly observed that the sailors were preparing the anchors, which they would need when they reached landfall. “Land, land cried aloud from every tongue—but the rain descends in torrents, I cannot go upon deck.”<sup>27</sup>

The ship was in sight of Cape Ray on the southwest point of Newfoundland, a high mountain covered with snow. However, even as the rain cleared, she again retired to her berth feeling unwell and shivering with cold. “I have missed the opportunity for again seeing land though I have not seen any for the last thirty days.”<sup>28</sup> The next day they passed Magdalan Island and a high outcropping of rock called Bird Island. Markerly observed that huge flocks of seafowl nested there and raised their young in this

very secure place. Perhaps in her mind she contrasted that security with the doubts concerning the welfare of her infant grandson. She also noted large pods of whales called “finners” which spouted and played near the vessel. Here again in nature she witnessed a joyful family blessed with health as opposed to her own.

Nature became more cooperative the following day as the weather cleared and they entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence and approached the island of Aveticosti with its lighthouse. After passing this seventy-mile long island, they came to Cape Jaspian, which is near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. There they picked up a French Canadian pilot who would guide them up the river to the quarantine facilities on Grosse Island. Their guide informed them that they would dock in about three days, and she appeared concerned that he only got home to his wife and children about once a month. Once more, this strong but sensitive woman displayed a deep sense of family affiliation.<sup>29</sup>

True to his word, the pilot brought them into the quarantine headquarters on Grosse Island on May 21, and doctors ordered all the passengers to go ashore for physical examinations. The immigrants were also required to launder all of their clothing and the ship’s linens. Fortunately, the illness on board the ship had consisted primarily of seasickness, sparing the passengers contagious diseases like typhus, typhoid, or cholera. Although Markerly grudgingly acknowledged the necessity for these sanitation procedures, she had a lesser opinion for the security measures in place. She observed that the soldiers garrisoned there served “...no other purpose under heaven than to take a few more pounds out of John Bull’s pockets.”<sup>30</sup> Numerous English emigrants took issue with many of the British government’s policies, especially taxation, and Lucy’s poetry addressed this.

I'll go where the workman is paid for his labour  
Where taxes are few; and where tythes are unknown,  
Where no one despotheth the goods of his neighbour  
But rests in contentment enjoying his own...<sup>31</sup>

As previously noted, this English widow had operated a seven-acre plot with her husband, Samuel Markerly, near the village of Fleet, Lincolnshire. Given the size of this operation, even under the best of circumstances, profits would have been marginal. Since the land had been in the family for several generations, it was quite possible that yields diminished as soil quality degraded. The flyleaves of the books in her private library, which she brought to America, mentioned many family members going into service.<sup>32</sup> This supports the contention that the Markerly youth had to augment the family income as wage earners. Flat prices for grain and increased taxes forced many small agriculturalists into dire economic circumstances. The lure of cheap lands on the expanding American frontier provided a strong incentive for English farmers tilling marginal soils to risk moving their families to the United States, thus maintaining their class status as independent yeomen.<sup>33</sup>

The British government itself had encouraged emigration from the United Kingdom when the House of Commons appointed a select committee for this purpose in 1826. Five years later Britain established the Government Commission on Emigration to collect and disseminate information to its citizens about the United States.<sup>34</sup> In addition, Methodists surely would have resented having to support the Anglican Church with tithes. In January of 1832, British Parliament passed a law mandating that citizens dying with insufficient property to pay for burial expenses would not receive governmental assistance. Instead, surgeons and medical schools would receive the body for dissection and anatomy studies. This mandatory claim on one's remains ran counter to the funerary

practices and sensibilities of the time. These last two government policies influenced Markerly's decision to emigrate as reflected in her poetry prior to leaving England.

There no upstart tyrant shall rise to oppress me  
Nor priest made by law, e'er attempt to delude  
There no evil game laws exist to distress me  
The bounties of nature, from man to exclude  
Without dread of a poorhouse or fear of a jail  
Nor at Death the disgusting decree be awarded  
"Be hacked up in pieces" lest science should fail

O England poor England thy sun's set forever  
Thy laws are defective, thy people oppressed  
But revenge for their wrongs will not slumber forever  
Indignant humanity will be redressed  
Then I'll fly thy dark borders; but still I must leave thee  
Thou land of my birth and my ancestors graves  
Tis' prudence and courage united behooves me  
To flee from oppression and trust the salt waves<sup>35</sup>

Although she had moved from salt to fresh water, she still felt oppressed on Grosse Island. She compared herself to Napoleon Bonaparte, confined to a large craggy rock, and one would think that after over five weeks of ocean travel with its attendant seasickness that she would take the opportunity to relax and savor the solid ground beneath her feet. Her memoir reflected an obvious impatience to leave the quarantine area after only two days and again board the *HMS Westmoreland*. She also expressed supreme confidence in the ability of the Captain and crew who had scrubbed and whitewashed the vessel before she returned to the ship, eager to continue her journey.<sup>36</sup>

As they sailed up the St. Lawrence on May 23, Markerly commented that the scenery along the river was grand beyond description. On that day, they dropped anchor at the dock in Quebec, Canada, and she described the ancient ramparts that rose 360 steps above the water's edge. She observed that the fortress appeared impregnable then wryly recalled how British forces had taken the citadel. The city's industry and bustling

economy impressed her, but she was less than pleased with the customhouse officers who delayed their transfer from the *HMS Westmoreland* to the steamboat, *Canadian Eagle*, which would take them to Montreal. During that portion of the journey, she compared the numerous farms along the river to hers in Lincolnshire as it appeared fifty years ago. This may have been a momentary feeling of homesickness, but she still seemed eager to reach Montreal.<sup>37</sup>

From a distance, Markerly considered Montreal to be a beautiful city as they pulled up to docks, but her opinion changed radically the next day. After strolling through the town she observed,

I was never so disappointed by first appearances in my life for I found it the nastiest, dirtiest place my eyes ever beheld—the streets are an abomination—manure and dead animals are thrown into the middle of them and there left to putrefy—last year the cholera did carry off hundreds of the inhabitants and my only wonder is that any escaped with life.<sup>38</sup>

That Sunday evening a passenger's child fell overboard at dockside and the crew failed to recover her body. The next day she disembarked from the steamship and hired wagons to transport their luggage to another steamship, which would carry them across the river. On the opposite shore, she hired four wagons to take the family to St. John, eighteen miles away. She commented that the roads were the muddiest she had ever seen and that the horses would lose their footing as the wagons became repeatedly mired. They did not arrive until 9 o'clock that evening and stayed at a tavern kept by an Irishman. Markerly assigned family members to take turns watching the luggage through the evening. Her journal entry reflected the stress of this part of the journey, stating, "I never was among such a set of cannibals in my life, and I believe the Canadians are so in general."<sup>39</sup> This English woman's critical assessment of Canadians revealed her reaction to frontier

infrastructure. Furthermore, it was common during travel for expenses often to run over budget.

On May 28, Markerly and her party boarded the steamship *Phoenix*, which would travel up the Champlain River and across the lake of the same name, a distance of 160 miles to Whitehall. In the distance, she saw Vermont's high mountains covered with snow. The next day they boarded a Northern Canal boat, which carried them to Fort Ann, and the widow noted that they had traveled 4,200 miles and were greatly fatigued. She observed that she would not wish to settle in this area, but that the inhabitants were a great improvement over the Canadians. Then they transferred to the Western Canal (Erie) and on this boat the incompetent captain and steersman repeatedly hung up the craft through the night. She marveled at the changes in the countryside as neat villages, plowed fields, and large orchards came into view the next day. Were it not for her overwhelming exhaustion, she could have enjoyed this scenery even more. By June 1, they had passed through Schenectady, New York and on Sunday morning, they neared Utica, where she observed that all the children were very ill.<sup>40</sup>

In her journal she recorded that little William only had a few hours to live, and by noon, her grandchild had expired. Rather than discuss her own sense of loss, Markerly expressed relief that the child would no longer suffer. Her main concern was how Hannah would bear her grief and what consequences it would have on the mother's health. Once again, her first thoughts were for her family rather than herself. Two days later they stopped at a village called New London for a few hours where they assembled the baby's coffin and then continued. The next morning, Wednesday, June 5, they arrived at Port Byron. Her brother David Hurn and son-in-law William Doncaster

preceded her into town to meet Markerly's son, John. She declared, "I will not attempt to describe my feelings, but I had from my first leaving home and for sometime previous to that event strove to keep them in subordination and I did so then."<sup>41</sup> That evening they interred little William in a burying ground on a high hill. Despite all of her efforts, not all of her family would finish the journey "From Old England towards America."<sup>42</sup>

Lucy Hurn Markerly's journal ends with the Port Byron entry, but Hudson newspaper obituaries, deed transfers, and Federal census records prove that the Markerly family built a successful life in Hudson, Ohio. Her son John and nephew David Hurn Jr. established a successful carriage making business and livery. As a land speculator, John Markillie's name appeared on thirty transfers in Summit County, Ohio. He also served as the Hudson Village Clerk, maintained a photography business, and donated land for the village cemetery. The Doncaster family operated a profitable funeral home well into the twentieth century.<sup>43</sup> The Markerly family owed much of its success to a strong willed woman who never strayed from her vision of a better life in the United States for her children and their descendants. Not content to eke out an existence as a marginalized agriculturalist, this woman analyzed business potential in the Western Reserve and took proactive steps to exploit those opportunities in an expanding American economy. Her leadership and planning skills were definite assets in this family endeavor. Markerly assumed responsibility for securing passage on this long and complex journey from England to America. Setting an example of strength and courage, she relied on her faith in God and spiritual beliefs to sustain her on the long voyage. She refused to allow illness and physical hardships to deter her from a carefully planned mission. Keeping her emotions in check, she presented a picture of hope and offered relief in times of fear and

danger. Her family's welfare was always her primary concern. Rather than tolerating government oppression, rising taxes, and a state sponsored religion financed by tithes, she chose to immigrate to America where her loved ones would benefit not only from enhanced economic opportunities, but also enjoy a society that cherished individual rights and respected personal liberty.

As a case study, this English immigrant provides insight into the role of women and their family duties and obligations in the nineteenth-century. Following the death of her second husband, Lucy Hurn Markerly assumed responsibilities beyond the traditional domestic sphere of childcare and homemaking. Rather than passively accepting British government decrees and economic pressures, she displayed agency in moving her family to the Western Reserve village of Hudson. Her journal offers a contrast to the accounts examined in Lillian Schlissel's *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*. Markerly was a first generation immigrant to the Midwestern United States, and her story revealed an unbridled enthusiasm for the transition. According to Schlissel, the accounts of American women pioneers to Oregon and California displayed not just a lack of enthusiasm for the move, but an outright anguish at the dislocation. Several factors may account for the difference in attitude. Although Markerly covered a much longer distance, her principle conveyance was water transportation, which lasted less than three months. The land journey from St. Joseph, Missouri to California and Oregon took from six to nine months. Markerly, as a widow, actively chose to come to America, whereas virtually all of the Schlissel accounts revealed married women's deference to nineteenth-century patriarchy concerning the overland experience.<sup>44</sup> Yet both the Markerly journal, "From Old England towards America," and *Women's Diaries of the Western Journey*

shared common themes of childcare and illness, pregnancy and infant death, as they strove to maintain family integrity.

**Appendix A**

Farewell to Old England -I shortly must leave thee  
The bright star of hope, can no longer delude  
Adversity soon would of comforts bereave me  
Perhaps pallid want might its presence intrude  
Adieu my dear friends that I leave far behind me  
May health and prosperity on you attend  
Tho' absent remembrance forever shall bind me  
To each one endeared by the title of friend. "-  
Ye scenes of my childhood adieu now forever  
Yet sweet recollections of juvenile days  
Shall dwell in my bosom tho' oceans may sever  
And oft be the theme of my rustical days  
Farewell ye remains of my dearest connections  
Who sleep in oblivion beneath the cold clay  
We'll meet yet again with refined recollections  
I joy in the prospect of that happy day –

Yet while in this transient state of probation  
The blessings of life must desirable be  
For in spite of each learned over grave dissertation  
Content and stern poverty ne' er will agree .  
Then I'll fly from this land of oppression and sorrow  
And seek me a country where comforts abound  
where no one need dread the approach of tomorrow  
Lest meat, drink and clothing should cease to be found  
I'll go where the workman is paid for his labour  
Where taxes are few; and where tythes are unknown,  
Where no one desposteth the goods of his neighbour  
But rests in contentment enjoying his own –

**Appendix A-Continued**

On the banks of Ohio, I'll seek me a dwelling  
There, the war-whoop of arson no more shall astound  
By far more appalling than angry waves swelling  
Tho' floods devastating envelope the ground

There no upstart tyrant shall rise to oppress me  
Nor priest made by law, e'er attempt to delude  
There no evil game laws exist to distress me  
The bounties of nature, from man to exclude  
Without dread of a poorhouse or fear of a jail  
Nor at Death the disgusting decree be awarded  
\* "Be hacked up in pieces" lest science should fail

O England poor England thy sun's set forever  
The laws are defective, thy people oppressed  
But revenge for their wrongs will not slumber forever  
Indignant humanity will be redressed  
Then I'll fly thy dark borders; but still I must leave thee  
Thou land of my birth and my ancestors graves  
Tis' prudence and courage united behooves me  
To flee from oppression and trust the salt waves

Lucy Markillie

Jan'y 27, 1833

\*In 1832, the British parliament passed a law that any person dying who was not possessed of property, sufficient to pay the expenses of their funeral, was not to be buried, but given to the surgeons for dissection; I believe the law was never acted upon.

**Appendix A-Continued**

Sunday morning June 28th 1835

How solemn and silent are all things around,  
Soft zephyr scarce breathes in the trees,  
And the trembling cow bell's monotonous sound  
Is just borne aloft by the breeze

The flood gates have stopt the career of the stream  
The water lies sullen and still  
The ax, and the horses, and anvil at rest  
And ceased is the clack of the mill.

No church bells have ever disturbed the repose  
Of these woods and those vallies around  
A blank -as was chaos e're nature arose  
And a silence almost as profound.

Give me back; give me back the gay bustle of life  
Where animate scenes are in view  
Where sweet smiling faces and pleasures are rife  
Then to mud and the back woods adieu.

By Lucy Markillie

**Appendix B**

Books Brought from England in 1833 by Lucy Markerly

Cooke's Pocket Library Editions:

The Adventures of Roderic Random by T. Smollet, MD. Vol. 1

Signed: L. Markerly March 6, 1814

The Poetical Works of John Gay. Vol. 1. .

Signed: Lucy Markerly March 6, 1814

The Poetical Works of John Gay. Vol. 2.

Signed: L. Markerly March 6, 1814

The Poetical Works of Oliver Goldsmith.

Signed: Lucy Markerly March 6, 1814

The Poetical Works of William Falconer

Creation: A Philosophical Poem. By Sir Richard Blackmore

Signed: F. Wooley, Spalding Mary Asbridge Jan'y 2nd 1812 Spalding

The Poetical Works of Thomas Gray

The Poetical Works of T. Smollett, M.D.

The Poems of Dr. Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester

The Poetical Works of John Earl of Rochester

Signed: Lucy Markerly March 6, 1814

The Poetical Works of Alexander Pope. Vol. 1

Signed: Sam'l Markerly Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> 1806

The Poetical Works of Alexander Pope. Vol. 2

Signed: Sam'l Markerly Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> 1806

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, by Laurence Sterne Vol. 1

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, by Laurence Sterne Vol. 2

The Poetical Works of S. Johnson, LL.D

The Poetical Works of William Falconer

Signed: L. Markerly March 6, 1814

**Appendix B-Continued**

A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy by Mr. Yorick (Laurence Sterne)  
George Barnwell; a Tragedy in five acts by George Lillo  
The Stranger; or, Misanthropy & Repentance. A Drama in five acts -from  
the German of Augustus von Kotzebue 1805  
Poems on his Domestic Circumstances by Lord Byron 1823  
Signed: J. Markillie

The Poetical Works of John Milton, London, T. Wilkins, 1794  
Signed: Sam'l Markerly July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1815

Essays on Men and Manners by William Shenstone, Ludlow, George Nicholson  
Signed: Lucy Markerly Jan'y 6, 1814

Elements of Geometry. Written in French By F. Ignat. Gaston Pardies And  
render'd into English By John Harris, D.D. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, London,  
D. Midwinter and A. Ward, 1734  
Signed: Sam'l Markerly Fleet 1800

The Universal Magazine. Vol CII & CIII (one volume), London, W. Bent, 1798  
Signed: Sam'l Markerly Fleet Feb'y 4 1798 S. Markerly Feb'y 4th 1811

Merope, A Tragedy by Aaron Hill. London 1777  
The True-born Englishman; A Satyr. 24<sup>th</sup> Edition. London 1775  
The Chaplet. A Musical Entertainment by Moses Mendez. London 1777  
The Drummer; or, the Haunted House, A Comedy by Mr. Addison. London 1777  
Zara. A Tragedy by Aaron Hill. London 1778  
Damon and Phillida. A Ballad Opera. London 1777  
Orpheus and Eurydice. An Opera. London 1777  
Phaedra and Hippolitius. A Tragedy. By Mr. Edmund Smith. London 1777  
A Lecture on Mimicry. By George Saville Carey. London 1776  
The Rehearsal. A Comedy. By George, late Duke of Buckingham. London 1777  
The Lottery. A Farce. By Henry Fielding. London 1775  
The Drummer-or, the Haunted House, A Comedy by Mr. Addison. London 1777  
Signed: John Markerly Jan'ry 16<sup>th</sup> 1828

Mauger, Claudius, French Grammar, 20<sup>th</sup> edition, London, R. Wellington, 1705  
Signed: June the first 1705. Bought this book for Samuel Markilly cost  
two shillings and sixpence 2/-6 Le premier de Juin 1705.  
Jay achete ce Livre Pour Samuel Marquilly, coute trente fou.  
Another signature: Samuel Markille  
On fly leaves John Markillie has written family history

John Markillie's school penmanship notebooks.

**Endnotes**

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<sup>1</sup> Donna Gabaccia, "Immigrant Women: Nowhere at Home?," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 10 (Summer 1991): 61-87.; Suzanne Sinke, "A Historiography of Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Ethnic Forum* 9 (1989): 122-145.; Sydney Stahl Weinberg, "The Treatment of Women in Immigration History: A Call for Change," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, vol. 11, no. 4, (Summer 1992): 25-67.; Maxine S. Seller, "Beyond the Stereotype: A New Look at the Immigrant Woman, 1880-1924," *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 3 (Spring 1975): 59-70.; Susan Jacoby, "World of Our Mothers: Immigrant Women, Immigrant Daughter," *Present Tense* 6 (Spring 1979): 48-51.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for examples of Lucy Markerly's verse.

<sup>3</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder, Lucy Markerly Journal, 1833, 1. Hereafter referred to as the Markerly Journal, 1833. Note that after coming to America her son John changed the spelling of the name "Markerly" to "Markillie." This was done to end confusion as to the pronunciation of the name.

<sup>4</sup> There is an exact copy of the original journal of Lucy Hurn Markerly's journey from Fleet, Lincolnshire, England to the U.S. in 1833. Mrs. Grace Doncaster Post, great granddaughter of Lucy Hurn Markerly, lent the diary of the trip to Mrs. Ethel Chittenden Turner. As the diary was in poor condition, Mrs. Turner had an exact copy made. Page references to the journal match this copy. Both the original and the copy are on file at the Hudson Library and Historical Society, Hudson, Ohio, MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder.

<sup>5</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder.

<sup>6</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder.; Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Charlotte Erickson, "Emigration from the British Isles to the U.S.A. in 1831," *Population Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2 (July 1981): 193-7.; Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England: Essays on British Emigration in the Nineteen-Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 25-6, 159.; Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>9</sup> William E. Van Vugt, *Britain to America: Mid-Nineteenth-Century Immigrants to the United States* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 1-9. Van Vugt notes that Britain was the first urban and industrial nation in history according to its 1851 census with only a fifth of the labor force employed in agriculture and over half of its population inhabiting urban areas of eight thousand or more people.

<sup>10</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Van Vugt, 122-30.

<sup>12</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.; Ana Laura Zambrano, "The Exodus to America: 1820-1870," *Amerikastudien/American Studies* [West Germany] 20 1 (1975): 101-121.; Van Vugt, 14.

<sup>14</sup> Charlotte Erickson, "Emigration From the British Isles to the U.S.A. in 1841: Part II, Who were the English Emigrants?," *Population Studies*, vol. 44, no. 1 (March 1990): 23-4.; Erickson, *Leaving England: Essays on British Emigration in the Nineteenth-Century*, 25.; Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833,1-2.

<sup>16</sup> Maldwyn A. Jones, *Destination America* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), 25-6.; Van Vugt, 14-16, 137-8; Markerly Journal, 1833, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 2-3. See also Terry Coleman, *Passage to America* (London, England: Hutchinson & Company, 1972), 100-118.

<sup>18</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 3.; Van Vugt, 137-9. See also Howard B. Furer, ed. *The British in America: 1578-1970* (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1972), 126-7. He describes British government regulations enacted to set safety standards for ships carrying emigrants, especially noting the high rate of accidents and losses on those vessels bound for Quebec, Canada. He states that in 1834 there were seventeen shipwrecks, which cost the lives of at least 731 emigrants while destroying the property of many others, and leaving them in distressed conditions.

<sup>19</sup> Charlotte Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1972), 38.; Erickson, *Leaving England: Essays on British Emigration in the Nineteenth-Century*, 25-7.; Markerly Journal, 1833, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Erickson, "Emigration from the British Isles to the U.S.A. in 1841: Part II. Who were the English Emigrants?," 37-9.; Van Vugt, 11.

<sup>21</sup> Van Vugt, 10-12.

<sup>22</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder

<sup>23</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 4.

<sup>24</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 4.

- <sup>25</sup> Van Vugt, 14.; Markerly Journal, 1833, 4.; Furer, 26-7.
- <sup>26</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 5.; Zambrano, 101-121.
- <sup>27</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 6.
- <sup>28</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 6.
- <sup>29</sup> Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America*, 38-39.; Markerly Journal, 6.
- <sup>30</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 6-7. See also Charlotte Erickson, ed., *Emigration from Europe 1815-1914* (London, England: Adam & Charles, 1976), 241-46.
- <sup>31</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder.
- <sup>32</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder. See Appendix B for a list of books the Markerly family brought to America. Several volumes survive in the Hudson Library and Historical Society Archives. Many of the volumes were works of poetry.
- <sup>33</sup> Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America*, 22-3.; Erickson, "Emigration from the British Isles to the U.S.A. in 1841: Part II. Who were the English Emigrants?," 37-9.
- <sup>34</sup> Maldwyn Allen Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 101-2.; H.J.M. Johnston, *British Emigration Policy 1815-1830* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1972), 109-28.; Furer, 31-5.
- <sup>35</sup> MS, M624, Markillie Papers, File Folder.; See also W. S. Shepperson, *British Emigration to North America* (Minneapolis, MN: 1957), 5-11.
- <sup>36</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 7.
- <sup>37</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 7-8.
- <sup>38</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 8.
- <sup>39</sup> Van Vugt, 16.; Markerly Journal, 1833, 8.
- <sup>40</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 9.
- <sup>41</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 10.
- <sup>42</sup> Markerly Journal, 1833, 1.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Government, Federal Census Records (Hudson: OH, 1870).; *Chagrin Falls Exponent*, 5 and 19 March, 1885.; *Hub-Times*, 28 May, 1931.; *Hudson Enterprise*, 29 December, 1877.; *Hudson Herald*, 22 April, 1926.; *Hudson Independent*, 25 November, 1904.

<sup>44</sup> Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey* (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1992), 1-15.

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